

Study Session Meeting Minutes – January 27, 2020
Ivan “Ike” Ackerman Council Chambers

A Study Session Meeting of the Waverly City Council was held on January 27, 2020 at 7:00 P. M. at City Hall. Mayor Hoffman presided.

A. Mayor Hoffman called the meeting order.

B. Roll Call

Present: Beaufore, Birgen, Drenkow, Glaser, Kangas, Rathe, and Schneider. Absent: None.

C. Moved by Drenkow, seconded by Schneider to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion passed. Yes: 7 No: 0 Absent: 0

D. Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda

- There were none.

E. Consent Calendar

1. Moved by Birgen, seconded by Beaufore to Set the Public Hearing date to set the maximum property tax levy for the Fiscal Year 2020-21 Budget for February 17, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Motion passed. Yes: 7 No: 0 Absent: 0

F. Study Session Calendar.

1. Presentation by Scott Kaisand, President of the Waverly Rotary Club.

- The Waverly Rotary Club was founded March 6, 1927 with the help of the Waterloo Rotary Club. Meetings are held each Thursday at noon at the Waverly Area Veteran’s Post. There are currently 53 members in Rotary. In July 2018, a satellite club was formed which meets twice monthly with a third meeting being a service project. The satellite club is a part of the original rotary club. To raise funds, they hold an Oktoberfest with an authentic German meal and live auction which is held in conjunction with Oktoberfest. The other fundraiser they do is the Rotary Melt-Down, a fish habitat that melts through the ice. The raised funds are used for things such as: in 2019, they donated \$5,000 to a clean water initiative through a Self Help program in Nicaragua; in 2018, they helped stain and seal the Rail Trail Bridge; in 2017, constructed the Pelikan Park Shelter; in 2016, helped stain and seal the Kids Kingdom playground; for the past three years, donated \$2,500 per year to the Wartburg College Holiday Shop to help families in need; donated \$3,000 to a Water to Thrive project for a new water well in Africa in conjunction with Wartburg College; each year, money is donated to children at Lutheran Services of Iowa for Christmas presents and there are three scholarships of \$1,000 each awarded to graduating seniors for continued education; and helped with beautification projects throughout the downtown area. Waverly Rotary Club is part of Waverly International and the theme for this year is “Rotary Connects the World”. Rotary’s main initiatives are to eradicate Polio and to provide clean water to help reduce disease. Waverly Rotary sponsors foreign exchange students every other year. Their motto is “Service Above Self to Help Those Less Fortunate”. Rotarian Pledge is “Is it the truth, is it fair to all concerned, will it build good will and better friendships, and is it beneficial to all concerned?”

2. Presentation from Trees Forever

- Paul Cheville, Dave Carlson, and Tab Ray were present representing Trees Forever. Paul Cheville gave an overview of the history of Trees Forever. Mr. Cheville stated a quote “The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second-best time is now”. Trees Forever began in 1989 and is based out of Marion, Iowa. The mission statement is: To plant and care for trees and the environment by empowering people, building

community, and promoting stewardship. Trees Forever plants over 3,000,000 trees and shrubs per year with the help of over 7,000 volunteers with a value of over \$14,000,000 all over Iowa and partially into Illinois. Waverly's Trees Forever was founded in 1991 by a local group of volunteers with funding from, then, Waverly Light & Power as an energy saving initiative. Waverly Utilities now donates \$10,000 per year. Other funding comes from private donations, matching funds for projects, grants (last year there was \$6,800 received in grant money), and in-kind labor from volunteers and other members. Trees Forever is also made up of interested citizens, representatives from businesses, retired community members, and a state liaison, Patty Reisinger, who also helps out. Trees Forever is open to anyone with no fees or dues. Recently, membership has gone down. Meetings are the second Thursday of each month at noon at the Civic Center. Waverly Trees Forever has planted over 7,500 trees. The goal would be to plant another 300 trees in the next three years. There are usually two planting projects each year; one in the spring and one in the fall. Trees Forever has also been a big help with the Re-Tree Waverly project. There have been about 600 public trees taken down around town. Ash Trees make up about 13½% of trees in town and Maple Trees make up about 40% of the tree population in town. It is not always practical to replace trees that are removed for projects. This should be done on a case by case basis. Trees on City owned property are valued between \$9 - \$18 million. Trees for Kids is part of the Re-Tree Waverly initiative and is done each year in the spring. Trees Forever have received matching grants from the DNR and MidAmerican through Trees Please. Coupons from local nurseries are available at the nurseries and the Leisure Services office. The WSR Science Club Tree sale has been another big partner. If you are interested in the tree sale, you can contact Renee Borglum at the high school. There is a discounted price for the trees sold through this program. Mr. Cheville reviewed future projects and past projects. Mr. Carlson will be attending a Shade Tree short course where he hopes to learn about proper planting techniques, current trends, and ways to properly care for trees. They have also held pruning and planting demonstrations, completed SUFTA (Sustainable Urban Forestry Training & Assistance), and worked with the ISU Extension. Mr. Cheville also thanked the Rotary Club for helping with the replacement of the Linden Trees that had to be removed downtown with the Bremer Avenue project. There is no cost to obtain the designation of a Trees Forever designation. Being a part of Trees Forever is being part of an elite group within the state, and it is a good and right thing to do.

3. Discussion of the City of Waverly's Multi-Modal Transportation Plan
4. Emergency Response Time Review on Bremer Avenue
5. Shared Bikeway Plan
6. Pedestrian, Cyclists and Motorist Crash Rates
7. Economic Impact Concerns

- Since Councilmember Schneider brought items 3 – 7 to the Mayor for placement on the agenda, Schneider commented that he broke these items down into categories for ease of discussion since they are all inter-related. Mayor Hoffman directed that the items be merged and discussed as one topic.
- Councilmember Schneider presented City Clerk with a petition. He said that while departments are doing a great job, his concern was for firefighters getting to the fire station during peak times of the day. The I.D.O.T. is doing a traffic study on response times. Schneider made a point of observation and read aloud a statement by retired State Trooper John Baber saying that Bremer Avenue is a mess. There was discussion on whether emergency vehicles could pass slower traffic on Bremer Avenue using the middle lane.

Mayor Hoffman read Iowa Code Section 321.231 to clarify for Councilmember Beaufore that it is, indeed, legal for authorized emergency vehicles to pass slower traffic using the middle lane. This does not include firefighters that have a blue light on their personal vehicle. Schneider mentioned a competition of two goods where people, fire fighters and other emergency responders are afraid to speak out for fear of retaliation and other reasons. Councilmember Drenkow expressed that the idea of retaliation is offensive and when he is told something in confidence, it is kept in confidence. Drenkow added that it is insulting to imply that anyone on this Council and anyone on City staff would take retaliation on someone who made a comment on this issue. Mayor Hoffman gave thanks to City Administrator Bronner for his work on the response times. He also thanked Chief of Police Pursell. Birgen asked Schneider for verification that he went through all of the data that City Administrator Bronner gave the Council. Schneider said that he did go through all the data. Councilmember Rathe mentioned that the hospital has not identified any problem with response time nor has she heard a unified opinion from the fire department. Councilmember Beaufore stated that it is hard to look at any of this data and analyze it due to it all being very situational. Several members voiced that the data Schneider provided is insignificant since there is not enough data. The response time data compiling wasn't done to question the abilities of our emergency responders.

- Schneider commented that the D.O.T. never mentioned anything about diversion in regards to a 4 to 3-lane conversion. Some neighbors call 5th Avenue NW – 5th Avenue Expressway, the 5th Avenue Freeway, etc. This is a concern when you talk about shared bikeways. Shared bikeways are where the bicyclists and pedestrians are sharing the road with motorists. He would like to see us consider bike boulevards for aesthetics and safety reasons. A bike boulevard would be optimized for bike traffic so bicycles have priority. The proposed roads were 39th Street SE, 3rd Street SE, Cedar Lane, Wartburg College area to 1st and 6th Streets NW. A Multi-Modal Transportation Plan is referred to in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Councilmember Drenkow voiced that the Dry Run Project did complete a bicycle/pedestrian lane that is heavily used and could maybe take a look at other streets. Birgen noted that there is a difference between making routes that are safer for bikes to travel and making routes to get bikes off other roads such as Bremer Avenue. Schneider made mention of Council possibly looking at the bicycle laws this spring.

- When speaking of Pedestrian, Cyclists and Motorist Crash Rates, Schneider commented that he believed the traffic counts are down by 25 – 35%. Staff has not heard these numbers, and there is a traffic study planned for this spring. Rathe brought up the lack of data pertaining to Waverly rather than other cities with these discussions. Schneider informed Guest Councilmember Cyndi Campbell that there is not a locally formed group to accumulate and sort data. He also talked about crashes and injuries, with injuries going up and crashes going down. Beaufore stated that she takes an alternate road instead of using Bremer Avenue due to the increased traffic that she has seen personally. Campbell noted that traffic diverted from the Dry Run Project now uses 3rd Avenue NW which seems to work fine, and there have been no incidents. Schneider spoke in regards to how downtown businesses have been impacted, saying he did not have any numbers to refer to, but that not all businesses like it. It was then established there were approximately 110 businesses along Bremer. Rathe commented that information is being presented as facts, but there is no data to back it up. Drenkow said that he has heard feedback from patrons that they are not as fearful of getting out of their vehicles anymore now that there is a buffer lane. Schneider said that many business owners find these road diets extremely antagonistic. Birgen said that he feels what most business owners are concerned about is

uncertainty and risk. He added that he has only heard positive comments from people, including business owners. Responding to Schneider's comment regarding not having traffic downtown anymore, Rathe noted that apparently some people feel that we have too much traffic as Beaufore stated earlier that she diverts her driving away from Bremer due to heavy traffic. Rathe added that all of us need to support the merchants and not avoid the downtown as best as we can. Campbell commented that as a consumer, she finds it pleasant. Hoffman said that there is probably a handful of people that would possibly redact their signature and some that would add their signature. Trucks and longer vehicles still seem to not have enough space for parking. Beaufore commented on the inconsistent painted lines for parking. Schneider said that he does not dislike the road diet, but he dislikes all the negative impacts that come with it. Glaser said that he appreciates the dialogue of this meeting.

G. Reports from Boards and Commissions

1. Golf Commission Minutes; November 12, 2019; Received into record.
2. Library Board of Trustees Minutes; December 10, 2019; Received into record.

H. Staff Updates

- Leisure Services Director Garret Riordan announced that Waverly is a finalist for the Healthy Home Towns Award, powered by Wellmark Community Award and Waverly was nominated by Waverly Area Partnership for Healthy Living (WAPHL). The Candlelight Ski will be Saturday, February 8, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. There will be a neighborhood meeting for the ball diamond complex on Thursday, January 30, in the Civic Center from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. The sledding hill is open at the Municipal Golf Course.
- Chief of Police Richard Pursell announced that applications to participate in the Citizens Academy are due January 31st.

I. City Council Comments

- Councilmember Birgen invited anyone that would like to discuss City business with him to meet him at the Wooden Foot directly following this meeting.
- Councilmember Schneider mentioned that there is closed captioning available on the live stream of the meetings. He also reminded Councilmembers to speak louder and articulate.
- Councilmember Glaser recognized the Waverly Public Library for all the programs that are available. Last year, they had 1,200 different programs with 30,000 participants. There is a movie night coming to the library on February 15 that includes dinner and childcare from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Registration is in advance.
- Councilmember Rathe noted the Robotics Meet coming up over the weekend and wished them good luck.
- Councilmember Kangas reminded those that would like to caucus, they will be held on Monday, February 3. Kangas also congratulated the WSR Women's Wrestling Team for achieving the State Championship.
- Guest Council Cyndi Campbell said that being a guest council person was a great reminder as to how important the community is and how great it is. Waverly has a terrific small business core, great industry, wonderful City Administration that really works very well, and great public works – streets are cleared and garbage is picked up. When on Council, it isn't about you, one person, it is always about the community and the decisions you make that impact everybody.

J. Mayor's Comments

- Mayor Hoffman gave a reminder that the meeting for February 3 was officially moved to February 10th. Hoffman noted an eight-hour budget session on Saturday, January 25. The library is also good for looking up historical information online under Waverly Public Library Newspapers.

K. Moved Kangas, seconded by Glaser to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed and the Council meeting adjourned at 8:54 P.M.

Yes: 7 No: 0 Absent: 0



Adam Hoffman, Mayor

ATTEST:



Carla Guyer, City Clerk